

Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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Is a United Protestant Church Possible Now?

Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

Speakers

E. STANLEY JONES

TRUMAN B. DOUGLASS

LUTHER W. YOUNGDAHL

WALTER A. MAIER

(See also page 12)

COMING

—December 14, 1948—

What Does the Crisis in China Mean to Us?

—December 21, 1948—

What Should We Do To Win the Cold War With Russia?





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The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of view presented.

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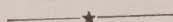
THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 14:

"What Does the Crisis in China Mean to Us?"



THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 21:

"What Should We Do To Win the Cold War With Russia?"



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Town Meeting



GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR

BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR



DECEMBER 7, 1948

VOL. 14, No. 32

Is a United Protestant Church Possible Now?

Announcer:

Everytime you hear that Crier's bell, if you are a regular Town Meeting listener, you know what it means. But do all your friends and neighbors know?

Strange as it may seem to you, a regular Town Meeting listener, we receive each week many letters from people who have heard "America's Town Meeting" for the first time. This is a big country and not all of its many millions of people know what your town meeting does each week.

You modern Town Criers who are using the telephone to remind your friends of Town Meeting each Tuesday night are doing a fine job. This is one of the very simple things you can do to help build a well-informed public opinion in America, and in these times we need an informed public if we are to remain free.

In the interest of good citizenship, be a modern Town Crier and tell your friends about Town Meeting every Tuesday night.

Now to preside over our discussion tonight, here is our moderator, the President of Town Hall, New York, and founder of "America's Town Meeting of the Air," Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Last week we discussed the question "Are Our Ideals Being Destroyed by the Machine Age?" Tonight, we turn to the question of religion and, of course, we mean organized religion. "Is a United Protestant Church Possible Now?"

There are approximately 250 different Protestant denominations in this country today with memberships ranging from a few hundred to nine million and totaling some 42,000,000 people. The Roman Catholic Church has a membership of approximately 25,000,000 making a total of 67 million enrolled members in the Christian churches in this country.

Our research file on church unity

tells us that this subject is one of growing importance among the leaders and people of Protestant churches. Last summer in Amsterdam, Holland, representatives of 141 Protestant and Orthodox churches met to deal with the question of church unity. But long before this meeting, one of the best known missionary-evangelists in the world today, Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who is to speak to us tonight, had been advocating a plan of church unity which is being widely discussed in this country and abroad.

Most of Dr. Jones' missionary career has been spent in the Asiatic countries but he returns to America nearly every year to talk and preach. He has written 13 books that have been translated in over 20 different foreign languages.

Because of the widespread interest in tonight's question, we've invited Dr. Jones, Governor Youngdahl of Minnesota, Dr. Walter A. Maier, originator of the International Lutheran Hour, and Dr. Truman B. Douglass, Executive Vice President of the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches, to lead us in our discussion.

So we'll hear first from Dr. E. Stanley Jones of the Methodist Church, now missionary to India. Dr. Jones. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Jones:

May I take my audience into

my confidence? This morning on awakening I found myself praying that each of the four speakers tonight might put up his case in the best way possible. I suppose I could pray that prayer safely for I knew that Federal Union was so sound and feasible it would come out on top.

Is a united Protestant church possible now? Well, if it isn't possible now, it ought to be; 250 denominations with a common loyalty to Christ and not working together simply doesn't make sense. Most of us are agreed on that necessity—I think all of us. Mr. Denny—but it's a question of *how*.

I'm convinced that Federal Union answers that word "how." What do we mean by Federal Union of the churches? Federal Union goes beyond the church councils, good and necessary as they are, for they are advisory councils to sovereign denominations.

It goes beyond federation, for in a federation the constituent bodies are still intact, not surrendering their sovereignty to anything beyond themselves.

It goes beyond merger or amalgamation for under merger probably not more than 20 or, at the most, 40 per cent would begin to lose their identity in one new church. That would leave 60 to 80 per cent outside the union. That would not mean church union

but a union of some churches—a larger denomination.

But as far as merger can go, we would approve it and commend it. It could go on under Federal Union.

By Federal Union, we mean a corporate and organic union, just as the thirteen colonies dedicated sovereignty to the union, retaining local self-government in the states, we would apply that principle to the churches. There would be one church: the Church of Christ in America.

Under that one church there would be branches of the one church—the Lutheran branch of the Church of Christ in America, the Baptist branch, the Episcopal branch, the Nazarene branch. Those branches have dedicated sovereignty to the Union. They are no longer churches but branches of the one church.

Within those branches there could be local self-government. If any branch wants bishops it could have them but it could not compel the rest to take them as the price of union. The same with adult baptism by immersion. Each branch would be free to hold its distinctiveness within the Union.

Between possibly 90 per cent of the branches there would be an interchange of members, ministers, and intercommunion straight off. If any two or more branches desired to amalgamate, they could do so under Federal Union. There would be that many fewer branches

in the Church of Christ in America.

The property could be held, as now, by the branches. Only that property created by the Union and for the Union would be held by the Union.

The doctrinal basis we could make as simple and as profound as Jesus made it. When Peter made the great confession, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," Jesus replied, "On this rock"—on the rock of this confession—"I will build my church."

If a branch will confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, we would say, "You're on the rock." And this is the rock which is beneath us all. To confess Jesus as the Son of God would include His Saviourhood—plus.

We would ask the branches not to dim or compromise their characteristic truths, but bring them in and give them to the rest.

The principle of Federal Union puts together two instincts: a desire for union with the whole and the desire for local self-government. It has worked within these United States producing an *e pluribus unum*—out of the many, one.

The answer to the question "Is a United Protestant Church Possible Now?" must be, "If you wait for union of amalgamation, no, it is not possible now." But if you want a united Protestant church you can have it now. You can have it now through Federal

Union. Proof? Well, out of audiences ranging up to 5,000, only a maximum of 11 people have ever voted against Federal Union. The people apparently are prepared for Federal Union now. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Dr. Jones. Well, there's another point of view on tonight's question. In fact there are probably a great many more than we have spokesmen for tonight, but we're going to hear another presented by a Midwesterner, a man who was brought up in the far West, who now lives in New York, Dr. Truman B. Douglass, Executive Vice President of the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches. Dr. Douglass. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Douglass:

I'm grateful to you, Dr. Jones, for giving your approval to the idea of achieving church union by merger wherever that is possible. Where you and I differ, if we do differ, is on the question of whether enough branches of Protestantism can merge and do this soon enough to give us a united Protestant church now.

If we put our question, "Can the Protestant churches unite?" the answer is very simple. The fact is that the Protestant churches are uniting. They have been uniting for the past century and a half.

Last August, the representatives

of 150 churches came together in the first assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. But go back 30 years and the Christians represented by 150 churches last August were divided into 180 church bodies. Now go back a century and a half and the churches represented by 150 denominations at Amsterdam were divided into 240 denominational groups.

Can the Protestant churches unite? The answer to that one is clear. They are uniting. But unity is qualitative as well as quantitative. There is, I suppose, a certain kind of unity represented by a collection of beads held together on a single string. There is a unity of a totally different order in the organic unity of the human body. I'm much more interested in seeing a section of Protestantism achieve this latter kind of unity than in getting a large number of denominational beads on an organizational string.

Dr. Maier, if I understand him, takes a dim view of the possibility of achieving substantial Protestant unity except in the very distant future. I think the plain facts are against him.

Dr. Jones and Governor Youngdahl seem to me to be too pessimistic as to the degree of unity which is possible now. They believe that under a plan of Federal Union, some of the loyalty now attached to the denominations can

be transferred to a super-organization called the united church.

I believe that the denominations are precisely what is the matter with us. They stand in the way of a united church and so long as they continue to exist even in the subordinate or vestigial forms which the Federal Unionists allow them, they will continue to stand in the way of a united church. I think we've got to get rid of them if we are to have any real union and we might as well start out to do this from the beginning.

It is my conviction, Mr. Denny, that a group of denominations representing at least half the Protestants in the United States are now ready to get out of the denominational system when there is something else to get into. They're ready to give up their denominational names and form one united church.

Multitudes of the Protestant laity prove this by their actions. Thousands of them transfer their membership from one denomination to another for purposes of convenience. They do this not because Christianity is a matter of convenience but because denominationalism is not worth any inconvenience.

The denominations do not stand for the real differences among Protestant people. There are more shades of opinion and practice within denominations than there are between them.

Our existing denominationalism

rests mainly upon historic controversies which few of the laity know anything about, upon institutional inertia, and, I'm sorry to say, upon a fair amount of human cantankerousness.

In the newly formed Church of South India, people have come together across the major chasms which divide Protestants. They've not found it necessary to cling to their former denominational names and organizations. They have been able to unite because Christians in India know that they are up against something as they face the non-Christian society around them.

Today the idea is dawning that the Christian church in America is up against something, too. It is up against competing faiths which are aggressively contending for the allegiance of men. The cultural and spiritual crisis which is to decide whether we are to have a continuing civilization rooted in the Christian faith and ethics is a life and death business.

American Protestants are waking up to this fact and when we come wide awake, we will discover that we can have and must have a united church now. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Dr. Truman Douglass. Well, it's a good thing we have a layman on tonight's program, and for this viewpoint we went to the State of Minnesota and invited the popular Governor of that State who is a member of

the Messiah Lutheran Church of Minnesota, has served on the Supreme Court bench, and has long been a member of the Board of Administration of the Lutheran Church there.

Governor Luther Youngdahl, we're delighted to welcome you to Town Hall and Town Meeting. Governor Youngdahl of Minnesota. (*Applause.*)

Governor Youngdahl:

Dr. Douglass, I do not believe that we can achieve a united Protestant church under your plan of amalgamation. Under the Federal Union Plan, as proposed by Dr. Jones, I believe that we can get both amalgamation, so far as it is possible to attain it, and a united Protestant church now.

Dr. Jones reports that 99 per cent of the people in his audiences around the country, during this past year, voted for the Federal Union Plan. If the vote were taken in the Lutheran Church, to which I belong, I feel sure that you could not get 20 per cent of the people in favor of amalgamating the church as suggested by Dr. Douglass, whereas I feel confident that an overwhelming majority would vote in favor of the Federal Union Plan as proposed by Dr. Jones.

You observe that I indicate that a united church is possible now. I am convinced that we cannot afford to delay the necessary action for a united Protestant church.

Today, civilization, by all known symptoms, is spiritually ill. Only a change of heart can prevent disaster, and only religion can bring this about, for it alone has the power to make man see that he can be different. It can put him in touch with a super force that can produce a miracle, and it is such a miracle that we so desperately need if we are to remove the insecurity, selfishness, and hate which threaten the future with catastrophe.

To help meet this great task, we now see hundreds of diverse and often competing Protestant sects or denominations. This situation has resulted in a tragically unorganized Christian program.

As you know, in some areas, it has meant too many churches, with an overlapping of Christian service. In other sections, it has resulted in too few churches. In the mission field, we Protestants have had so many competing denominational workers that the unconverted, in many instances, have been confused and unimpressed by our efforts.

It was said that there are no atheists in fox-holes. Yes, in the midst of horror and fear of war man must turn to God, but now that the crisis has momentarily passed, or so it may seem, we do not find any great rush to join our churches by these same people who prayed and relied upon a Supreme Being in time of danger.

Even in our own land approxi

mately 50 per cent of the people are unchurched. Why? Could it be that many of these people are bewildered and disappointed by the lack of unity in the Protestant churches?

We have long conceded that military victory can be won only by complete unity. We have failed to carry out the same effective work in conducting the greatest battle of all—the spiritual campaign against hate, greed, and selfishness, which lead to war. It is the one battle which, if won in the hearts of men, would make peace a living reality for now and for all time.

How shall we unite? I believe the Federal Union offers a practical plan which will work now.

As you know, I have been a Judge for many years. I have had occasion to study intimately the great structure of our National Government. I have come to respect the fine division of powers under the Federal Union Plan, the system of checks and balances, each state retaining the right to local self-government, with the people of the states relinquishing enough power to the Federal Government for the good of all.

This system has worked for our Republic. It can bring union to the Protestant churches. It will enable us to preserve the rich variety of our religious expression, and yet make possible a united church.

We cannot delay the formation

of a united church. Dr. Maier, I do not believe that we will survive delay. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Governor Youngdahl. Few radio listeners have not at one time or another heard our next speaker on the International Lutheran Hour. In fact, Dr. Maier, we hope that all your regular audience is with us tonight to hear you discuss this important question with your other distinguished colleagues. Dr. Maier represents a different branch of the Lutheran Church from the one represented by Governor Youngdahl, and a different point of view.

And now, Dr. Maier, we're eager to hear your viewpoint. Dr. Walter Maier, of the Lutheran Church, the Missouri Synod. Dr. Maier. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Maier:

Now, let's get one thing straight right at the outset. The millions who think as I do and for whom I'm speaking tonight, not officially, but nevertheless in the spirit, want a united Protestant church. We pray for it; we work for it; but we do insist that it be a true God-made, not man-made, united church.

You've heard Dr. Douglass' idea of an all-out, organic Protestant union, although he's offered no specific plan whatever for action.

You've listened to the outline for Federal Union as proposed by Dr. Jones and my very good

friend, Dr. Luther Youngdahl, who certainly ought to be on my side tonight. (*Laughter.*)

Now my thought calls for spiritual unity as directed by the Bible. This asks for a series of conferences on Christian doctrine, one embracing all the divisions of each denomination, and at the same time representing all Protestant churches.

The discussions would start, not with the mistaken idea that Protestantism is now strongly united, but with a detailed study of the day and night differences that separate the Protestant churches when the term Protestant includes capitalists and communists, modernists and fundamentalists, unitarians and trinitarians. Churches in which some preachers lift up the cross of Jesus Christ and others speak on "Bonga! Bonga! Bonga," "Amos and Andy," "The Lewis and Clark Expedition to the Pacific Northwest"—actual subjects mentioned in our broadcast mail—are certainly not united.

These Christian unity conferences should then systematically study what God's word says in the matter of the disputed doctrines and adopt a scriptural verdict.

These other unity programs you have heard set doctrinal problems aside as secondary. Dr. Jones admits clearly "Federal Union does by-pass these problems," and I tell you Protestantism cannot survive by such agreement to disagree.

If it is to live, it must insist

on the full acceptance of every truth in Scripture.

Christ declares, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed." He asks that we "teach all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

An outward union without inward unity must fail. These Christian unity conferences then should come to a full acceptance, not of the social gospel, but of the saving gospel. It is not enough as you, Dr. Jones, propose that this be the creedal basis for the church union: "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God," for these words have been interpreted in conflicting and incorrect ways. They do not say—and this is the climax of Protestantism—that Jesus is the Savior of sinners, the Redeemer of the whole human race. (*Applause.*)

Justification by faith in Christ together with its twin truth, the inerrancy of Holy Scripture, are the keystone and the cornerstones of Protestantism. Neglect one or both and the whole structure will fall into ruin.

Finally, these conferences on Christian unity should formulate a detailed statement of doctrine, covering all essential teachings of scripture. This confession of faith should be acknowledged by the individual churches and all denominations as their creed.

This will be a long, gradual process for you cannot remove overnight and by a few resolutions, a difficulty which has been

centuries in the making. Nor can organization and super-organization, all purely human arrangements, alone bring the harmony we desire.

The Old Testament prophet's protest, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord" still holds. Not committees and sub-committees, directors and executive officers, give the churches the guidance they need, but the Holy Spirit Himself.

These other plans for uniting the Protestant churches really involve the creating of other ecclesiastical super-organizations which can encourage spiritual dictatorship. We've seen that trend in this country. Give us a united Protestant church; I ask you to pray for it. But let it be fully and honestly unified in its acceptance of the faith once given, rooted in the Bible, and climaxed in Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of the world. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Dr. Maier. Well, we see why he's on the radio. (*Laughter.*) And I'm sure that our television listeners—viewers—will agree that he did a pretty good job on television, too. (*Laughter.*)

Well, gentlemen, come up here and join me around the microphone now and let's have a little discussion among ourselves. We're going to start with Dr. Jones, as usual, the first speaker, who's had several darts thrown at him here

this evening. He can talk back and heckle the speakers before we let the audience start heckling him. Dr. Jones?

Dr. Jones: I want to suggest that in the finding of union, ultimately, we must also be able to have union in the presentation of union. We went across this country and, as far as we know, in speaking to many, many cities, we have never left a controversy behind us—a split. It's been uniting in the process of trying to unite.

I'd like to ask Dr. Douglass a question. He's a member of the Congregational Church and they're trying to go into union with the Evangelical Reformed—a simple union without complications from the bishops; there are no bishops involved.

Now in that union—is that going to split the Congregational Church, even on that simple basis? For instance, Dr. Richards came back from one of these conferences the other day and said this to me: "I'm afraid, if we go on with this union, we're going to split the Congregational Church."

Now, in the name of union, are you going to split a denomination? If you split it over a single, simple thing like the Evangelical-Reformed and the Congregationalists coming together and amalgamating, how much more would you split it, if you went out and tried to unite the church, as Dr. Douglass suggests in one of his articles, on the basis of episcopacy—having

Bishops. Wouldn't you then split every situation in which you presented it?

Dr. Douglass: The answer to Dr. Jones' question must, of course be a matter of judgment because the proposed union between the Congregational Christian churches

and the Evangelical Reformed Church is still before those two bodies. I do not believe that it is going to split either of the denominations. I think that, because of the fact that it involves some crossing of some major denominational lines — systems that

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

ELI STANLEY JONES—Born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1884, Mr. Jones is a graduate of Asbury College at Wilmore, Kentucky. He also has a D.D. degree from Duke University and S.T.D. from Syracuse University. Since 1907, he has been an evangelist to the high castes of India. He was elected a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1928, but resigned to continue with missionary work. He is the founder of two Christian Ashrams at Sat Tal and Lucknow, India.

Mr. Jones is the author of many books. His book, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, has been translated into 20 languages. He has also written many articles for magazines such as the *Christian Herald* and the *Christian Advocate*.

LUTHER WALLACE YOUNGDAHL—One of eight children, Luther Youngdahl was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1896, of Swedish Lutheran parentage. He attended South High School in Minneapolis and went to the University of Minnesota for one year. He received his B.A. degree from Gustavus Adolphus College, the Lutheran School in St. Peter, Minn.

After World War I, in which Governor Youngdahl entered the Army as a private and was demobilized as a lieutenant, he returned to the Univ. of Minnesota College of Law. Receiving his LL.B. degree in 1921, he served as assistant city attorney in Minneapolis for a couple of years before entering the practice of law. He was appointed municipal judge in 1930, and in 1936 was elected district judge of Hennepin County in Minneapolis. From 1942 until 1946, he served as associate justice of the Minneapolis Supreme Court. From this position, he resigned to run for the governorship of the state in 1946 and was elected by a substantial margin.

Governor Youngdahl was chosen "Minnesotan of 1947" by a poll of 1,000 business, professional, and civic leaders. He taught law for ten years at the Minneapolis College of Law. He has been active in the Parent-Teacher Association, the YMCA, Big Brothers, Boy Scout

Court of Honor, and other civic groups. He also is a member of several Scandinavian Clubs and choral societies.

TRUMAN BARTLETT DOUGLASS—Since 1943, Dr. Douglass has been executive vice president of the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches. Born in Grinnell, Iowa, in 1901, he received his A.B. from Pomona College; his A.M. from Columbia; B.D. from Union Theological Seminary; and D.D. from Chicago Theological Seminary.

Dr. Douglass was ordained into the ministry of the Congregational Church in 1926. He served as associate pastor of Union Congregational Church of Upper Montclair, N.J., for four years; and of Pilgrim Congregational Church of St. Louis, Mo., for eight years.

He has been an executive and member of numerous church and civic groups, and has contributed many articles to religious journals.

WALTER ARTHUR MAIER—Born in Boston, Mass., in 1893, Dr. Maier has A.B. degrees from Boston University and Concordia Seminary (St. Louis, Mo.). He has an A.M. and a Ph.D. from Harvard; a D.D. from Concordia College (Unley, South Australia); and an LL.D. from Houghton College. From 1920 to 1922, Dr. Maier was executive secretary of the International Walther League. Since 1922, he has been professor of Semitic languages and Old Testament Interpretation at Concordia Seminary.

From 1920 until 1945, Dr. Maier was editor of the *Walther League Messenger*. Since 1945, he has been a regular speaker on the Lutheran Hour broadcast by the Mutual Broadcasting System.

During World War I, Dr. Maier engaged in relief work among the German prisoners from 1917 to 1919. In 1918, he was also camp pastor at Camp Gordon, Atlanta, Ga. During World War II, he was a technical advisor to Military Government in the Education and Religious Affairs Branch. He has written widely both for publication and for the radio.

have been some distance apart in matters of forms of government—it is a very good test case. Some of the basic problems that are before the church, as it looks to union, are being threshed out here. There are discussions; there may be difficulties, but I am convinced, because of the overwhelming support wherever the people of both denominations have had any chance to express their minds, that it is going to be completed and without any break in either of the uniting denominations.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Douglass. Governor Youngdahl, you've got a whole list of questions there, have you?

Governor Youngdahl: Not too many, Mr. Denny. I have been thinking of one thing after that very fine statement that Dr. Maier presented. He stressed the matter of spiritual unity. Over a decade ago, I was on a committee as a layman to try to bring about a spiritual unity and unity of doctrine. Even among the members of our Lutheran Church, it is discouraging and disillusioning to know that even now we haven't been able to attain it. How long are we to go on, I ask you? How long are we to go on even in our own Lutheran Church without being able to achieve agreement on doctrine and unity?

I think the Federal Union Plan will provide the atmosphere so that we can go on and improve in

the very fine thing of spiritual unity that Dr. Maier proposes.

I would like to ask you, Dr. Maier, as one friend to another, how you think it is possible when we haven't been able to achieve unity on doctrine, with the present set-up, that we could achieve such a unity with a broader denominational field before us?

Dr. Maier: In much the same way, Governor, that the Reformation came. About 1500—that's 17 years before Luther nailed the *Theses* on the church door, the people were saying, "How long, how long? How long is this going to last?" But they were praying for this, Governor, and that's what I haven't heard tonight. We've got to have prayer behind this thing and God can change it over night. He can certainly put into the hearts within our own group a development of those fine things that are going on. Mr. Denny, I can report to you tonight that the Lutheran churches are much closer together than they were, let's say, 25 years ago. So that this can come, first, by God in His time, and in answer to our prayers.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. A question, Dr. Douglass?

Dr. Douglass: I think those of us who represent a different kind of union from the Federal Union suggested by Dr. Jones and Gov. Youngdahl, are at some disadvantage in this respect: That it is fairly simple to claim that the Fed-

eral Union plan is easy of accomplishment because it has never yet been tried anywhere, and, therefore, none of the difficulties have emerged.

Now corporate union, or this actual merging of denominations has been tried and accomplished. It has been going forward for some time.

I wonder if Dr. Jones feels that in his thinking about the Federal Union Plan, the types of difficulties that may be met have been tested out, as far as their solution is concerned, in any of the efforts at unions which have preceded.

Dr. Jones: First of all, the Federal Union Plan has been under operation in our country, and it has produced the most united people on earth—a union out of diversity. Because we haven't adopted it in a world situation, in a larger situation, doesn't say that it won't work. We believe that it will work.

The fact of the matter is that none of the other plans have been tried out on a total scale. Therefore, we're all on the same basis, namely, union by amalgamation among the Protestants has not been carried out, except on a very limited scale. Union by Federal Union has also not been tried out, but it has been tried out in the United States. It has worked and produced the most united people on earth, and working in the United States, I don't see why we

couldn't apply it to the church because it is a universal principle applied politically to our situation but it could be applied to the churches.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Dr. Douglass, did you say you have another question to ask Dr. Jones?

Dr. Douglass: I would just like to ask whether Dr. Jones doesn't feel that he may be pressing this analogy to the Government a little too far. The essential thing about the arrangement between federal authority and state authority is that it follows geographical lines. I think that there may be some question now as to whether the states represent reasonable lines, and whether many of our national problems couldn't be better solved within regional areas.

Now, if Dr. Jones had some plan for moving all the Methodists to Iowa, and all the Baptists to Texas, and all the Congregationalists to Massachusetts, I think that it might be possible. But the place where our disunity becomes most visible is not in these denominational organizations broken down in Smith's Corners. It is the Methodist Church on one side of the street and the Congregational Church on the other side, or whatever the church may be, that makes the passerby wonder how many different kinds of religion are being represented by the church in that community.

Mr. Denny: Do you want to take that, Dr. Jones?

Dr. Jones: Dr. Douglass says that these two are not on a par. In the Federal Union of the United States, there is a geographical entity. In the Federal Union of the churches, it is a denominational entity. Therefore, they do not stand on the same basis.

Look at it a little closer and you will find that they do. In the Federal Union of the United States, the authority rests with the people. When we sat down to make the Constitution, we said, "We, the people of the United States, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution." We didn't say, "We, the States."

The Federal Union has relationships not with the states, primarily, but with the *people* of the states. The people delegate sufficient sovereignty to the state for purposes of representation and administration and then give the final sovereignty to the union.

In the same way, this could be a union of the people. Sovereignty would lie with the people in the churches. We would give a part of it to the branch, but we would give the rest of the sovereignty to the union, but it would rest with the people. In both cases it's a union of the people. And, therefore, the likeness is a real likeness and the union would be a union of the people, primarily, but delegating sufficient sovereignty to the

branch which would be a convenient entity under the one church.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Jones. Now while we get ready for our question period, I am sure that you, our listeners, will be interested in the following message.

Announcer: You are listening to the 537th broadcast of America's Town Meeting originating tonight in Town Hall, New York. We are discussing the question, "Is a United Protestant Church Possible Now?" We are about to take questions from the audience.

For your convenience, Town Hall prints each week a complete text of each Town Meeting, including the questions and answers to follow in the Town Meeting Bulletin. Copies of tonight's program, as well as past and future programs, may be secured by writing to Town Hall, New York 18, N. Y., enclosing 10c to cover the cost of printing and mailing. You should allow at least two weeks for delivery.

If you would like to subscribe to the Bulletin for six months, enclose \$2.35, or for a year send \$4.50. Or, if you would like a trial subscription, enclose \$1.00 for eleven issues.

If you are a high school student or teacher, it is not too early to inquire about the special Junior Town Meeting which is to take place here in Town Hall, New York, on March 22nd on the subject, "What Does Democracy Really Mean?"

In cooperation with the weekly newsmagazine, *Our Times*, published by the American Education Press, which also publishes our Town Meeting Bulletin, we are engaged in a talent search for four high school students to participate in this broadcast. One will be selected from the New York City

schools, three will come from other communities throughout the country. High School students anywhere in the United States are eligible. For full particulars, send your inquiry to Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

Now for our question period we return you to Mr. Denny.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Denny: Now we're ready to start the question period, and I'm going to start with my favorite color, the lady in the red hat.

Lady: Dr. Maier, what is true historical Protestantism?

Dr. Maier: In 1529, a group of believers protested against certain ordinances that were made. This was at Speyer and at that time they received the name Protestant. From that time it comes to mean those who, in practical language, believe in the inspiration of Scripture and in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those were the issues involved at that time.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, now the gentleman on the front row here.

Man: Dr. Jones, if rules obligatory upon all members are to be made, how can a hierarchy be prevented? If rules are not obligatory, how shall this be representative?

Mr. Denny: It sounds like a lawyer's question, but he's a preacher.

Dr. Jones: Our friend says how

can you have a union without hierarchy? Under amalgamation it would be difficult to keep from having an over-arching hierarchy. Under Federal Union, you would have the checks, because a good deal of authority remains back within the branches. That would keep it from being a hierarchy and, therefore, pontifical.

We believe, therefore, that Federal Union, with some of the sovereignty remaining back within the branches would be a check against a big hierarchy being produced. The rules would be the rules adopted by the people for themselves in the General Assembly of the Church of Christ in America, but it would be the people giving rules to themselves, because the General Assembly would be themselves writ large—not an extraneous body, but themselves writ large.

Therefore, it would be a self-discipline placed upon the people by themselves through their elected representatives. You could

therefore, have rules but self-given rules and it would keep you from having a hierarchy in Federal Union.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. I think you've got Dr. Maier on his feet here.

Dr. Maier: I just want to say, Dr. Jones, in your pamphlet you've asked the question, "What's going to keep this from becoming a spiritual tyranny?" and you said the people. (*Laughter and applause.*)

Mr. Denny: All right, thank you. Yes, Dr. Jones.

Dr. Jones: Of course, the people, for it's a union of the people but they elect their representatives, and if they don't represent them, the people call them back. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The lady in the blue dress, please.

Lady: Dr. Douglass, will you please elaborate on your statement that church union is more advanced on the foreign field than at home, and why is that?

Dr. Douglass: I think the reason is very simple—that disunity cannot be afforded on the foreign field. Even American Protestants have had sense enough to recognize that as they have planned their work overseas, so that, for example, in the education of the ministry, in theological education, there is scarcely a first-rate seminary for theological education overseas that is not a union seminary. All the nominations or

many denominations have gone together to provide that.

The reason why it is possible overseas and why we're having more difficulty with it here is the one which I suggested, that as the church confronts a pagan or non-Christian or neutral society it sees that it must have some consolidation of forces. Here, we are still somewhat immature in our facing of the real crisis which our Christian civilization confronts, and it seems to me that that is the element to which Dr. Jones and Governor Youngdahl do not give sufficient weight when they estimate the possibility of a complete coming together of major groups within Protestantism now.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman on the other aisle.

Man: Dr. Maier. Is it possible for us to have union among church bodies whose doctrinal bases differ radically and still have unity of teaching and practice?

Dr. Maier: Absolutely impossible. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: The young lady in the brown hat. That's right, or is it a black hat?

Lady: It's blue. (*Laughter.*)

Moderator Denny: Oh, it's blue. I'm sorry.

Lady: Dr. Jones. How can Protestants worship together when some believe in the Divinity of Christ, in the Immaculate Conception and Resurrection, and some believe that Christ was a man preaching a social gospel?

Dr. Jones: We have stated that we would make as the basis of the union, under Federal Union, the simple thing that Jesus made when Peter made the great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," and Jesus said, "On this rock I will build my church."

We have said, then, that any group that will make that confession—that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God—we'd say they are "on the Rock."

We would take them at their word that they believe what they say, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and not merely a human person as you suggest. The human person couldn't come into a Christian church such as we are envisioning because we believe that Jesus was the Divine Son of God and He founded the Christian church upon that confession.

Mr. Denny: The young lady looks as if she's not satisfied. Are you satisfied with that answer?

Lady: It would take too long to go into. That will do, thank you.

Mr. Denny: Dr. Maier wants to take up the cudgels for you there.

Dr. Maier: Well, if the little lady is not satisfied, she's right. We're dealing with the immortal souls of men and women. Now, Dr. Jones knows, and these other men on the platform know, that that passage has been turned and twisted so that the very Diety of the Lord Jesus Christ, even, has

been read out of it. We've got to have a clear cut statement on this thing, and we've got to emphasize as I've said, not only that Christ is the Son of God, but that He is the Saviour of the world and the only Saviour. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman on the aisle, please.

Man: Governor Youngdahl: What is the probability of Protestant Union in the United States going further than in Canada?

Governor Youngdahl: Well, sir, I don't know that I would like to make a comparison with our Canadian brethren, but I would think that in these United States with our great tradition and history behind us of the federal union, we ought to go much farther than the people in Canada. We have the tradition and background to go much farther; we have the experience. I don't know that I'd care to make any comparison as to what the situation—

Mr. Denny: Governor, how far have the people in Canada gone? Maybe the people in the United States don't know how far they've gone.

Governor Youngdahl: Well, now, Dr. Jones, you've been up in Canada recently and gotten a recent picture of the progress made in Canada on this very proposition. Maybe you can give us some up-to-date dope on this.

Dr. Jones: They've gone a long ways, and they are grateful. The non-Episcopal bodies have con-

together and have united in the United Church of Canada, and we are grateful. But, now they feel that they've got to have a principle, an overarching principle that would bring together the non-episcopacy ordained and the episcopacy ordained.

In other words, if they're going to have church union in Canada, it's got to be by Federal Union because union by amalgamation has gone as far as it could go. But the Anglican church is out of it, the Baptists are out of it, part of the Presbyterians are out of it, and others are out of it. Now, you've got to have some overarching principle that would bring them together beyond amalgamation, and the federal principle is the only one that I see which could bring them together. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman over on this aisle, please.

Man: A question for Dr. Maier. Dr. Jones mentioned a poll of 50,000 people. A recent issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* said that you had received 5,000,000 letters. What do the letters tell you about Protestant union, Dr. Maier?

Dr. Maier: They tell me that the call in Protestantism is back to the Bible, back to the Cross of the Lord, Jesus Christ. That's the popular vote in Protestantism today. That's not a pollster's vote, either. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman right down here.

Man: Dr. Jones, I'd like to ask, on Federal Union basis how would you provide for foreign mission boards and the other organizations which carry on the work of the church?

Dr. Jones: We would have a board of strategy mapping out a world strategy for missions, then assigning to the branches particular phases of that strategy, fulfilling it. Then where the branches couldn't fill it in, the church as a whole filling it in.

In other words, the branches would fulfill the part that they're doing now, plus a part of the total strategy. In other words, we would have a church planning a total impact upon the world instead of 256 separate denominations planning an impact upon the world. We would have a world strategy for missions at home and abroad, assigning differentiated portions to the branches of the union.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. I'm going to ask a question at this time of Dr. Maier, because he looks like maybe he can answer it. Dr. Maier, I think a lot of people want to know the answer to this. There are 250 different denominations. What is the main thing that is keeping them apart?

Dr. Maier: The main thing is difference in doctrine—doctrine in regard to some of the essentials of scripture. There are two groups—the Lutheran group and the Cal-

vinist group, the Episcopal group and the un-Episcopal group. The touchstone in the division is the question as to how they stand on scripture and how they stand on the atonement of Christ.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Dr. Douglass has a comment on that question. I thought maybe I could get two or three on that.

Dr. Douglass: I think that statement ought not to go unchallenged because I do not believe for a moment that the principal thing which is holding Christian people apart lies in the doctrinal area, because I know how many varieties of doctrine are found within the same denominational household.

I've heard Dr. Maier express some nostalgia for the early church, its unity and its spiritual vigor. Yet I wonder how he accounts for the fact that the two primary requirements which he would make for the unity of the church were not met by the early church. One was doctrinal uniformity, and the other was belief in the inerrancy of the scripture.

The early church, if one reads the records, was filled with discussions of doctrine which represented many different points of view—discussions and controversies. As for the inerrancy of scripture, during the first century not all of the scripture was yet written. So, one could hardly hold to the view of the inerrancy of something that didn't yet exist. Yet one cannot read the story of the early

church without feeling the throbb of this tremendous unity—this sense of oneness.

It was not a new doctrine or a uniformity of doctrine that created that but a new light which was in the world. That is what is going to bring the churches together—the response to this new light. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Dr. Maier back again.

Dr. Maier: We have got to correct that. The scripture says plainly in the Book of Acts, "They were all of one mind and in one spirit." When doctrinal division arose, when Peter began to preach something that wasn't gospel, Paul got after him, and he straightened that out, and he didn't have any Federal Union or any organic union, he went after that. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Too bad we haven't got somebody to straighten it out here tonight. (*Laughter.*) I know the moderator is going to dodge that job. The lady there in the red dress and the black hat.

Lady: Dr. Jones. Jesus mentioned *church* three times; he mentioned *Kingdom* 34 times in Nazareth. Why not proceed with the business of the Kingdom and stop quibbling about churches. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Jones: I'm grateful that our sister has brought out that question. If she knows me, she knows that my great emphasis has been upon the Kingdom—God's total

tarian order. I believe the church is a relative order under that totalitarian order. I believe that the Kingdom is God's answer to man's total need. To the degree that the church represents the Kingdom, I'm for the church. But the Kingdom judges the church and the Kingdom and the church are not synonymous, therefore, I want the church to move up to be more like the Kingdom, and, therefore, I want to do away with some of its divisions, and some of the over-all things that keep us apart. For I believe that the Kingdom would mean a world unity and a coming together of the world. That's one of the reasons why I'm for a union of the churches because it would bring us nearer to the Kingdom. The Kingdom is the absolute order, the church is the relative.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Dr. Maier has a comment.

Dr. Maier: Let this meeting not adjourn tonight without one protest against calling God's rule totalitarian. (Applause.) Let's also observe this: I went over to Germany for the Government last year. They had church union over there; they pushed them together. I want to testify tonight that if the churches had stayed separate over there and had not become ensnared with a compromise that has always followed such church union Hitler might never have arisen.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Dr. Jones?

Dr. Jones: I believe the Kingdom of God is a totalitarianism, laying a total demand upon the total life, but it is a totalitarianism which, when you obey it, you find total freedom. (Applause.)

Mr. Denny: The lady on the aisle, please.

Lady: Dr. Douglass. Under a united church, would the individual church member feel more or less responsible to support a united missionary effort?

Dr. Douglass: I think there would be a greater degree of responsibility on the individual member, because he could give his allegiance to this outreach of the church through its missionary enterprise without the reservations, which I think all of us must feel who are sensitive to the breaking of the unity of the church involved in denominationalism. It is our inability to give ourselves wholeheartedly to the upbuilding of the Christian community and its extension, because it is divided denominationally, that makes some reservation, it seems to me, in the support of the individual and some lack of absolute responsibility.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, now I wish there were time for more questions, but while our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's question, here is a special message of interest to you.

Announcer: We would like to take just a moment to tell you

how you can make this Christmas happier for some hungry, homeless child. Your contribution to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund will buy food and clothing to aid the thirty million children of Europe.

Just one dollar will provide ten children with a glass of milk a day for one week. One dollar will buy enough leather to make a pair of children's shoes; enough raw wool to make cloth for a child's coat. For example, you pay for the raw cotton, wool, or leather; the cost of converting the material into clothing and shoes is borne by the government of the receiving country, and it amounts to much more than your contribution. In this way, twice as many youngsters have warm wool jackets, sturdy shoes, and the food they need.

Please send your contribution to the United Nations Children's Fund, 405 East 42nd Street, New York City.

Now for the summaries of tonight's discussion, here is Mr. Denny.

Mr. Denny: Now, here is Dr. Walter Maier.

Dr. Maier: Before we can hope for a Protestant reunion, we must have reformation. We need the spirit of Martin Luther, not the concession of compromise. American Protestantism can go forward to greater unity only if it's ready to go back all the way to the Bible, and rededicate itself wholly to the

full, free, and final gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray, talk, and work for that 100 per cent loyalty to Christ. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Maier. Now a final word from Governor Youngdahl.

Governor Youngdahl: In this critical hour of history, we must have a Christianity that works and is applied in the hearts of men. It is not enough that we merely give lip-service to Christianity; we have got to be willing to pay the price for it. Young people are asking "Why? Why aren't adults able to get along with each other? Why has there got to be so much division among our churches?"

In our Protestant church, we are not making Christianity work, unless we unite. The Federal Union idea provides a practical and workable plan under which we can have a united church now. Our people will support it because it will give us a united church and still permit local self-government in each denomination.

The Federal Union plan has had eminent success in our National Government. It will work, too, in bringing order out of chaos in the Protestant churches.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Governor Youngdahl. Now Dr. Truman Douglass.

Dr. Douglass: I believe, Mr. Moderator, the Protestant churches can unite and that despite certain differences of opinion that have emerged tonight, because I do not

believe that in the Christian church difference of opinion is going to make or break the unity of the church. Some of the churches have discovered that they can work together in many enterprises and they now believe that they can live together in one household. I believe they're ready to do this without pausing on the intermediate step of Federal Union.

The new factor in this situation is the church's new sense of the urgency of the time. In the crisis of this hour, and in the church's own helplessness, it has become newly attentive to the prayer of our Lord that they all may be one. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Truman Douglass. Now a final word from Dr. Stanley Jones.

Dr. Jones: This set-up here tonight illustrates the church situation in regard to union. Dr. Maier stands alone, insisting on uniformity of doctrine before union. If you insist on unity of doctrine, you will split every church in this country in the name of union.

Dr. Douglass stands alone insisting on uniformity of organization and ordination before union. If you insist on that, again you will split every denomination in this country in the name of union.

Only Governor Youngdahl and I stand together—he, a Lutheran,

and I, a Methodist. We stand together, for we believe in a union of diversity—Federal Union.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Jones, Dr. Douglass, Dr. Youngdahl, and Dr. Maier. Now, friends, what do you think about this subject tonight? Your thoughtful responses to this discussion should make a very interesting magazine article, so send your replies to us here at Town Hall, and we'll let the speakers know what you think.

I'd like to remind you that you can secure a copy of tonight's program by sending for our Town Meeting Bulletin, enclosing 10 cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing to Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

Next week, December 14, we'll discuss the question, "What Does the Crisis in China Mean to Us?" Our speakers will be Senator Owen Brewster, Republican, of Maine; former Senator D. Worth Clark, Democrat of Idaho, who has just returned from China; Admiral Ellis M. Zacharias, U.S. Navy, Retired, and an expert on the Far East; and Mr. John K. Fairbank of Harvard University.


The following week from Battle Creek, Michigan, we'll discuss the question, "What Should We Do To Win the Cold War With Russia?" So plan to be with us next Tuesday and every Tuesday at the sound of the crier's bell. (*Applause.*)


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